

Statement by Rep. John James:

I want to thank Chairman Rogers and his staff for holding this hearing.

As many of you know, I am an Army veteran that led two Apache platoons during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Being a Member of Congress means that I can provide a unique perspective on the need to strengthen our warfighting capabilities.

Michigan's 10th District is home to some of our vital defense equities—not just in the State of Michigan, but for the nation—hence why it is the “Arsenal of Democracy.”

Selfridge Air National Guard Base, the crown jewel of Southeast Michigan, needs a new fighter mission. Our A-10 squadron are scheduled to be retired in the next 3-4 years, and that to me is unacceptable without having a fighter mission lined up to replace it. During appropriations season I submitted requests for increased F-15EX and F-35A procurement, and I hope to do whatever is necessary to aid the Air Force in making a fighter available for Selfridge.

TACOM is also in my district. It is the only active-duty U.S. military installation in the state of Michigan and the only active-duty Army installation in three states (Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana). It is responsible for a host of critical innovations for the Army's ground vehicle systems and tanks, but it also is critical for foreign military sales. My appropriations requests also mirrored the need to bolster the Research and Development work being done at TACOM and our Ground Vehicle System Centers, aka GVSC.

Along with TACOM, our district is also home to major defense contractors and subcontractors that produce defense items from Abram tanks to F-35s. I want to highlight that we must bolster our defense industrial capacity to meet the challenges that our country is currently facing. Any 10-year timeline is too long. I believe that we need to have the right people and the supply chain ready and able to rival our adversaries.

Lastly, I am glad Republicans are back in charge. We need to turn up the pressure on our adversaries, particularly Iran. I introduced the Address Iran's Malign Posture Act, which would turn up sanctions on Iran's financial backers and will also treat any nuclear deal with Iran as a treaty—requiring approval from the Senate. If the Biden Administration and any future Democratic administrations believe they are “doing the right thing” then they should not be afraid to bring any agreement before Congress.

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you with my priorities, and I hope we can work with my staff to get these included into this year's NDAA.

Thank you.